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THE

TOUR IN NORTH DEVON

OF

BROWN, JONES, ROBINSON, AND SMITH

Dedicated respectfully to

The Families of the above-named Gentlemen

BY

H. W. A.

[*For Private Circulation*]

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TOUR IN NORTH DEVON.

'Dulce est desipere in loco.'

On the approach of the Midsummer of 1861, four Friends, after a Term of hard reading, resolved on récreating themselves by a ramble through the North of Devon, whose picturesque beauties they had often heard of, but had never seen. I wish I was competent to describe those beauties; but as the pen without the aid of the pencil is inadequate to the task, I shall attempt but a very few sketches, or rather jottings, of scenery as it presented itself during the course of the Tour. These, however, will be the faithful results of my own observation; and whatever may be their defects, or those of my Narrative in general, I trust they will be excused on account of my inexperience as an Author. My appearance in that character is entirely owing to the solicitations of the Friends of the Tourists—an apology for *going to press* not the less true in this case for being somewhat hackneyed. To those Friends, therefore, I beg to

dedicate the following pages. The reader may, perhaps, suspect that the names which appear in the title-page are not the real patronymics of the gentlemen whose wanderings I am about to record. This really is the fact; and the reason for my baptising, or rather *anabaptising*, them by supposititious names, is that they are too bashful to appear by their genuine ones—an amiable failing, and one on which I think I can rely for their not publicly noticing any freedoms I may take with them or their sayings and doings in the following history.

The tour was at first intended to be entirely pedestrian, but impatience for the promised land impelled the party to avail themselves of the railway from Maidstone to Bristol, and thence to proceed for Devonshire down the Bristol Channel.

And now (that is, on the sweltering hot June 19) behold the Four at the Maidstone station, surrounded by an admiring circle of acquaintances, anxiously awaiting the train which is to bear them from their families and friends to the perils of the modern Babylon. Their parti-coloured costume, though not their 'Sunday best,' might well vie with that of the remarkable gentleman, of whom a facetious poet says, 'His jacket was red and his trowsers blue.' It was selected, however, more for travelling in hot weather than for effect or admiration—so let that pass.

The North Kent train was not at all frolicsome to-day, and brought the travellers to the metropolis in safety, and without much inconvenience, except that caused by the inhalation of dust during paroxysms of laughter produced by the pranks and jokes of Brown, which were incessant, and almost entitled him to a berth in that well-known refuge for the mentally afflicted on *Barming Heath.*

A ride from London Bridge station to Paddington on the roof of a 'bus is more easily imagined than described. The only remark, therefore, I shall make on it is, that the outside of the machine was preferred for the sake of freedom, both of eyes as well as limbs, and that, as there was more anxiety for a sight of Devonshire than of the shops and sights of London, Brown, Jones, Robinson, and Smith were more attracted by the demonstrations of the Cabbies to one another, and by the boys punching each other's heads at the corners of the streets, than with many other things more engaging to travellers in general.

Arrived at Paddington, and beds having been enquired for at the *Great Western* hotel, a reply from a swell waiter was in the negative; and the like application and reply were made and received at an adjoining hotel, *The Prince of Wales.* These *contretemps* were attributed by the Tourists to the grotesqueness of their costume, and to the

obtuseness of the Official in not perceiving their inherent dignity through it; but pride must have a fall, and they were fain to engage for that night one large sleeping-room, containing two beds, at a humbler *cabaret* in the neighbourhood. Returning to the Great Western hotel, they enjoyed an Aldermanic repast, not of a 'biled leg of mutton and the usual trimmins,' *à la* Sam. Weller, Esq., but of hissing mutton chops. After this 'Swarry' they betook themselves to their respective metropolitan business—very important you may depend. Robinson's consisted of visits among friends; so that he assured me he was unable to rejoin his companions till rather late. On his return to the *cabaret* referred to, he found Jones yawningly waiting in the coffee-room, trying to amuse himself with the illustrations of that fascinating publication, the *London Journal*, held upside down. The glimmering light beside him would not suffice to show them their room. No attendant being forthcoming, they agreed to bellow at the top of their voices alternately at the foot of the stairs; and Jones, being a fine *Tenor*, soon aroused the sleepy waiter, who supplied a luminary to light them on their way to what was, in expectation, a charming haven of rest; but here another slight dilemma arose, from the fact that both had forgotten the number of their bed-room. The only course open to them was to knock at the

doors of all the rooms on their floor, and this they did, at the peril of breaking their legs over the dirty boots outside; and the noise they made in endeavouring to find their lair, drew plenteous maledictions from the various more orderly Inmates. At length a ray of hope beamed on them in the likeness of No. 17; but that ray was soon dimmed by the fact that Brown and Smith had bolted the door, and were not easily aroused from a sound sleep. Perseverance, however, is seldom without its reward, and this was not an exceptional case. First Brown, and then Smith, opened their eyes, at least their mouths, and, having satisfied themselves that they were not beset by brigands, they admitted their companions. It was in the course of this night that they all made their first acquaintance with the genus *Cimex*, and the excitement occasioned by the mutual introduction banished sleep for a time from three of the Tourists; but Brown slept on in happy unconsciousness of the presence of his tiny but importunate bed-fellows. All the four, however, were at length under the power of Morpheus; but their slumber was of short duration, particularly as regards Robinson, whose *epidermis*, being thinnest, suffered most from the cause just hinted at; but he consoled himself, and at the same time vented his ire, by applying to his Tormentors some lines (more truthful, perhaps, than

elegant) whilom written on their smaller Relations:—

> 'Greater fleas have little fleas
> 'Upon their backs to bite 'em,
> 'And little fleas have lesser fleas,
> 'And so, *ad infinitum.*'

June 20.—Morning broke, alas! too soon, after such a troublous night. Messrs. Brown & Co. were obliged to tumble up in compliance with the Time-table, and to enable them to 'pick a bit' before starting for the West, viâ Bristol. How the operation of dressing was accomplished is a mystery, it having been performed under great difficulties, such as a sore scarcity of water, towels, &c. The packing of knapsacks was the next task; and that was accomplished in a somewhat inartistic, though effective, manner, those articles of dress which could not be *coaxed* inside being *jumped* upon by the whole party, after the Kafir mode of mangling. As speedily as possible they repaired to the coffee-room, where a few trifling circumstances afforded amusement, if they did not add to the delicacy of their breakfast. The milk had an undue portion of chalk and water; the cow had not been careful to prevent stray portions of her coat from intruding into the butter, &c. These *désagrémens*, however, did not interfere with the cheeriness of the repast; and, the latter being over, the party set out for the Paddington

station. From thence, after the necessary preliminaries of ticket and place taking, the good-natured *Dragon* of the Great Western line took them off screaming, as if delighted with the honour of conveying four such august personages as Brown, Jones, Robinson, and Smith.

After a transient and distant glance at Windsor Castle—Reading, Swindon, and Chippenham were passed in rapid succession. They then threaded the Box Tunnel, which, though a marvellous triumph of engineering art, appeared to some of the Tourists equally remarkable for giving travellers a disagreeable change of air. Then came *Bath*, with its gay environs—all which were quite new to Brown, Jones, and Smith, who much regretted that such a beautiful intermixture of city and suburban scenery should so rapidly escape from their gaze. After hastily passing the town of *Keynsham*, and *Newton Park*, the seat of W. H. G. Langton, Esq., *Bristol*, that hot-bed of labour and anxiety, with its never-failing concomitants of smoke, smells, and mud, presented itself; and there the party took leave of the rail to go in search of the *Cumberland Basin*, where lay the Steamer which was to take them down Channel, at a distance of about three miles. For that purpose they shouldered their knapsacks, and trudged along the banks of the savoury *Avon* and *the Bristol Docks*. The latter presented the

features of commercial docks in general—a fair supply of shipping, and lots of idle smoking sailors. The odours from the river, however, were much more significant, and savoured of defunct animal and decayed vegetable matter more than of attar of roses.

Frequently did the Travellers enquire their way and the distance, and were answered that it was about 100 yards. Oh, it appeared to them very *long measure*; and they began to think that the Cumberland Basin was a place after Mr. Chevy Slyme's own heart—'always round the corner.' It was, however, reached at last, and they were soon on board the Steamer; but had not been there long before another basin was in request, of more moderate dimensions, and luckily more easily found than that of the Cumberland family; but that is a subject on which I am not disposed to enlarge. One of the party now proposed to moisten his parched throat with a little beer, but the Steamer being about to 'start directly,' the luxury could not be obtained, and my thirsty friend, like many others, had to put up with the 'slip between the cup and the lip.' They remained in their watery prison, the Cumberland Basin, for more than an hour, continually 'going to start,' but never moving, with the exception of a gentle rocking from the motion of the vessel; all on board, in the meantime, baking in the sun,

as if they were becalmed at the Equator. Jones now complained that he was like the Clown, 'much as usual — hungry;' so that their cup of misery was fast filling, when they were somewhat cheered by the opening of the *Locks* and the mild excitement caused by the entrance of two barges *into* the *basin*, the exit of the Steamer from it, and their progress in the latter, seaward.

The passing view of *Clifton*, though distant, was pleasing, and that place is rendered more conspicuous, though perhaps not more picturesque, by two huge stone or brick Piers, many years since erected by the late Mr. Brunel on opposite sides of the Avon, as supporters to an intended suspension bridge across that river. Instead of the bridge, however, the scheme itself was *suspended*, from the want, I suppose, of a third supporter — easily guessed at.

The afternoon being fine, with a mild balmy west of England breeze, just sufficient to give the vessel an agreeable action, the cruise commenced most agreeably, making Brown so musical — I may say poetical — that he could not restrain himself from vocalising some *ex tempore* verses, which I should here present to my Readers had not the author, from the increasing motion of the Steamer, left them in a very unfinished state. As they passed down Channel they had a good view, though distant, of the Somersetshire coast,

including the towns and villages of *Weston-super-Mare, Burnham, Blue Anchor,* &c. The *Flat* and *Steep Holmes* were also espied; but those little islands, on account of their distance, did not attract much of the Travellers' notice—in fact, they were growing rather tired of the long series of *dissolving views* presented to them in such rapid succession; and, from the munching of biscuits going on, it appeared as if their attention was attracted elsewhere, and that some more substantial viands would soon be in request. To their delight, they were told that on their rounding a certain point they would be off *Lynmouth,* their intended point of disembarkation, in a quarter of an hour. Accordingly, off that place they soon *pulled up,* but at such a distance that Robinson, seeing no means provided for conveying passengers ashore, mildly asked whether they were expected to get out and walk. His anxiety on this point was quickly relieved on seeing two boats putting off from *Lynmouth,* and the Crew of the Steamer preparing to unship the luggage of the other passengers; for Brown & Co. carried all theirs at their backs. The four Friends then seated themselves, with their knapsacks, on a pile of luggage to be out of the way, and in due time were landed, at one shilling a-head, on a rough causeway of boulders, which answered, though very imperfectly, the purpose of a Pier. Over this

they marched, but in very bad order, and by no means in quick time, towards the Village, to the great damage of their shins, and almost at the risk of their necks. Arrived there, their attention was attracted by an Establishment in which articles in great variety were exhibited to public view. It had apparently been intended, originally, for a Grocer's shop, but the Proprietor had added to it a small room, constructed principally of glass, over the door of which a Sign-board acquainted the public that *James Haygrass* retailed 'beer and cider to be drunk on the premises.' This was considered too promising an occasion to be neglected; and, after a short conversation, Robinson (who had been appointed *Caterer-general*) called, and on enquiring whether they could be accommodated with something to eat as well as to drink, was informed by the Hostess that eggs and bacon would be on the table without delay. This intelligence being communicated to the rest of the party, they all repaired to the Crystal Palace, fully prepared to test the merits of the promised repast. During the progress of that operation they were interrupted, and somewhat annoyed by the appearance of the Proprietress of *Woodbine Cottage*, who hinted that, *as they were strangers*, there were rooms vacant at that Retreat which might *suit the gentlemen*. Of course there were. There is always a *Woodbine Cottage* with Apartments to

let by the Sea-side. This Visitor, on being promised that at a more convenient opportunity her offer would meet with attention, and admonished as to the danger of 'coming between hungry men and their victuals,' took her leave, the subject of Woodbine Cottage and its apartments being adjourned *sine die.*

After dinner, Mrs. Haygrass intimated that *she* could offer apartments suitable for four single gentlemen, *if four single gentlemen should be desirous of being so accommodated.* Accordingly, after a short discussion, it was settled that two bed-rooms and a sitting-room should be made over to her new Guests. The Four then took a short stroll about the village; and soon after their return, a knocking was heard at the window of their sitting-room, which looked out into a small garden close by the road. On opening the window, in walked a gentleman, who civilly volunteered his experience as a walking Directory to all the most attractive places in the neighbourhood, naming, among others, *Glenthorne, Waters' Meet, Brendon, the Valley of Rocks,* and *Ilfracombe.* Having thanked the *young Swell* for his kindness, he withdrew; and they departed to their Dormitory, to indemnify themselves for the privations and miseries of the preceding night, and to prepare themselves for the morrow's exertions.

Whilst Brown, Jones, Robinson, and Smith are taking their repose in Mrs. Haygrass's clean rooms and comfortable beds, I will endeavour to give a sketch of a few of the leading features of Lynmouth. Imagine yourself in a boat at sea, facing the land. Before you is a range of bold Cliffs, varying in height from about 1,000 to 1,200 feet, and extending right and left, parallel with the coast, for several miles, without any perceptible division or break in their outline, except immediately in front, where they abruptly sink, as if to allow the river Lyn, teeming with fish, to empty itself into the sea, and then rise again. These fine cliffs lift themselves boldly and precipitously from the water's edge, as though their constant sea-bathing had strengthened their nerves and brought them to their present Titanic proportions. Rather more inland rises a range of hills, separated from the coast range by a valley. In the gorge of the ravine formed by the division of the cliffs just mentioned, commanding an expansive view of the Bristol Channel, lies Lynmouth, 'embosomed high in tufted trees.' It is a beautiful village, and most romantically placed — superior in both respects to anything I ever before saw. The sea too, here, assumes its usual 'bright, bright blue,' and contrasts advantageously with the higher waters of the Channel, which are of a muddy red. In striking contrast with the lowly Lynmouth,

the neighbouring village of *Lynton* is placed on a lofty and almost inaccessible hill, like the nest of a Falcon, whose mouse-and-sparrow-eating successors still feebly hold their own among the Devonshire cliffs.

June 21.—Refreshed by a good night's rest, the Tourists, with keen appetites, assembled round the breakfast table, and made fearful havoc among the viands. Brown, Jones, and Smith then strolled down to the beach, leaving Robinson to his appointed duty of catering for dinner. As he was sauntering round the room, however, a book presented itself—not *Dr. Kitchener*, nor *Dr. Syntax in Search of the Picturesque*, but *Too Clever by Half*, or some such work—with which, aided by the charms of an easy chair, he became so amused that dinner was in danger of being lost in oblivion, when Mrs. Haygrass entered, bearing in her arms a tempting basket of Trout, and proposed his purchasing them. After a little chaffing on both sides, the whole catch (about three pounds' weight) was bought at the price of 1*s.* 6*d.* This bargain being completed, Robinson could not help congratulating himself on so easily being quit of the duties of the *cuisine* for that day; for, after the performances at breakfast, he was somewhat staggered at the onerous task he had undertaken as Purveyor-

general. He then joined his Friends on the beach, whom he found seated, and diverting themselves after the manner of most sea-side Idlers—viz. by throwing small pebbles at large ones till their arms ache, pickling their boots in briny sand, and almost dreaming their time away. The water being low, and my friends' modesty being 'at the full,' bathing, as had been intended, was out of the question; they therefore resolved on paying a visit to the far-famed 'Valley of Rocks,' clambering over the hills, in preference to the accustomed road, to the path along the cliffs, a beaten track being far too humdrum a style of doing things *for them*. This path, or rather terrace, about midway up, and running horizontally along a slope, of 600 or 700 feet and cut into it, is strikingly beautiful as well as sublime; for, on one hand, the slope covered with brakes and ferns ascends aloft, and on the other there is an uninterrupted prospect of the Bristol Channel, bounded only by an indistinct appearance of the Welsh Mountains, and it takes in also an extensive range of Devonshire coast. This wild and magnificent scenery almost overpowered some of the party, who experienced the not unusual impulse to roll themselves down the slope into the sea, which, however, was fortunately arrested by one of them, more poetical, or perhaps more frightened than the rest, exclaiming—

'How fearful
'And dizzy 't is to cast one's eyes so low!
'The crows and choughs that wing the midway air
'Show scarce so gross as beetles——'

'The murmuring surge,
'That on the unnumber'd idle pebbles chafes,
'Cannot be heard so high. I'll look no more,
'Lest my brain turn, and the deficient sight
'Topple down headlong.'

When the fit of Shakesperian inspiration was over, my friends discovered that it was all a mistake about these same 'crows and choughs,' and that they were quite another species, somewhat allied to themselves; for the winged visitors now appeared to be *Gulls*, and, as if to put the affinity out of doubt, though at the risk of their own necks, the featherless Bipeds fell to pelting their *distant* Relations, who, nothing alarmed, hovered round and screamed at their assailants, as if mocking them for their pains. This Gull-*battu* being over, the Valley of Rocks was soon reached.

I feel utterly unable to give anything like an adequate description of the scenery presented on first entering this interesting glade. Masses of rock rise abruptly from the top of a grassy slope, as if they had leapt out of their hiding-places on purpose to frighten the beholder, while, as you pass on, other large masses hang aloft, threatening to fall and crush you and everything beneath

them. Others, again, are flung one upon another in such confusion as to have gained for the whole the rustic and well-deserved appellation of *The World's Rubbish Heap.* One is known by the name of *Ragged Jack,* and another by the still more elegant and complimentary title of *The Devil's Cheese Wring.* I may add that the Valley is rendered still more picturesque by its commanding a view of the sea, similar to that before described. Some of these rocks are cut into rugged steps; and by such means the Travellers, with some difficulty, ascended one of them—*Ragged Jack,* I think, or his first cousin—and obtained a bird's-eye view of the *tout ensemble* as well as of the more distant landscape, and were richly repaid; for I feel convinced that such a *coup d'œil* cannot be surpassed, if equalled, in England. In taking leave of it, let me advise everyone in search of health or the picturesque, before going abroad for either, to visit the North of Devon and the lower part of Somerset. *There* can be bought delightful scenery, appetite, health, and good spirits for a beautiful walk, delicious Trout at 6*d.* a pound, and Porlock mutton for next to nothing!

With regretful steps, the party proceeded from the enchanting Valley to *Lea Abbey,* the residence of —— Bailey, Esq., distant about a mile towards Ilfracombe. It is a fine venerable-looking

Structure, commanding pleasing prospects both by sea and land, the effect of which was not lost on the *Wanderers*, who, in order to have the full enjoyment of it, made friends with a neighbouring tree, and reposed themselves *sub tegmine*, &c., like that Italian shepherd, *Tityrus*, of whom we have all read. A lazy old Party he was—used to loll about under trees for days together, playing the pan-pipes and singing songs to his sweetheart instead of minding his sheep. I ought to apologise for introducing such a low fellow here; but I have owed him a grudge for years, and am glad of an opportunity of giving him a wigging. Here they feasted their eyes and cooled their sun-parched frames at the same time; but their imaginations warmed, as their grosser part cooled, and visions of the trout, purchased in the morning, flitted before them. These visitings were accompanied by symptoms of appetite so stimulating that, abridging their ramble, they, with one consent, addressed themselves to the return walk to Lynmouth. The route lay through Lynton; but before that village was reached, the heat of the day or the solicitations of the Trout, or both, so overpowered Jones, that he was fain to seat himself by the road-side, like Job in the dust, but without his patience, to recruit his wasted strength. 'The wayworn Traveller,' being comforted and encouraged by his three friends, as much as the

Patriarch was, they all resumed their journey, and reached their domicile in due time.

The appearance of the Trout on the table augured well for Mrs. Haygrass's skill in cookery, and the delicacy soon vanished before such experts at the knife and fork as Brown, Jones & Co. No other stimulant than some Devonshire cider was required to aid digestion or compensate for the fatigue of the morning; for although Brown hinted that fish should always be kept swimming, the hilarity caused by the flickerings of his wit proved on this, as on other occasions, a 'feast of reason and the flow of soul.' Dinner being over, and the tide serving, a bath in the sea was proposed by Robinson; but Smith and Jones objected, alleging that bathing after dinner was disapproved of by the Faculty, and that after such a repast as they had just disposed of, it must be very dangerous; on which Brown said he had done the same thing many a time in the muddy *Medway*, and had come out unhurt, only a little *smelly*; that the present time was most opportune for bathing, as with such a cargo of fish as they had on board they could not help swimming all the better. This was a *floorer* to the two objectors, and Robinson's motion was carried, *nem. con.*; but I could not help observing that Jones, and perhaps Smith too, looked rather more inclined for napping than for

swimming, and as if convinced against their will,

'And of the same opinion still.'

However, they all set out, towels in hand, and, having found a modest nook on the Beach, they enjoyed the *Briny* to their hearts' content, and emerged safe, in spite of all forebodings. Having performed their toilet, and reposing themselves on an adjacent rock, gracefully draped with seaweed and studded with limpets, they gazed a while on the ebbing tide and a while on nothing, until a sense of drowsiness came over them, to counteract which a scramble up a steep and lofty cliff hard by was proposed. But this was more easily resolved on than accomplished; for, although the ascent was tolerably easy for about 30 feet, it then became rather perilous, being practicable only on their hands and knees, and over heather and loose stones, the latter of which continually slipped away, like 'Tom Tiddler's Ground,' on the heads of the hindmost, well-nigh sending them down the precipice upon the rocks and boulders beneath. Notwithstanding their toils and dangers, languid attempts at laughter were occasionally heard among them; but I suspect they did not come from the genuine source, but that they were forced, in order to dissemble their fears—as boys whistle when passing through a churchyard in the dark to persuade themselves that they are not afraid of ghosts. The Squad having, in small

detachments, at length reached the summit, they first stared at one another like strange cats, and then affectionately enquired for each other's health, as if astonished, after such perils, to find themselves again safe on *terra firma*.

The replies to these enquiries were, in general, very unsatisfactory, as there were several wounded, though none killed or missing. The particulars of each individual casualty were very properly not disclosed; but the *hardships* of Peter Pindar's Pilgrims with peas in their shoes could not have been comparable with those experienced by my Friends in their ascent of the cliff; and I feel assured that if some of their *craniums* had been then and there phrenologised, their natural amiable developements would have been scarcely discoverable amidst the bumps occasioned by the recent collisions.

Seated on the eminence now attained, the party luxuriated in the view of the sea expanded before them, and the delicious breeze with which they were fanned; but as night was fast coming on, and as some of them had heard that Travellers by night, in Devonshire, were sometimes *Pixie*-led,* they delayed not to descend towards Lynmouth,

* Pixie, among the Devonshire peasantry, means an imaginary mischievous being, something like 'Will o' the Wisp,' leading benighted travellers out of their way into ditches, quagmires, &c., when they are said to be 'Pixie-led.'

and this they did almost in the dark by the public road, by which, had they been more prudent or less romantic, they might previously have ascended. This road leads to *Glenthorne*, *Brendon*, and *Porlock*, from Lynmouth; but I hope to say more of two of those places ere long.

Arrived at their rooms, their tongues, as if envious of their legs, noisily retraced the afternoon's excursion, and discoursed of new plans for the morrow; but the Babel-like noise they made yielded in time to a more tuneful one, proceeding from their nasal organs as they lay in bed, and suggesting the idea that those organs had been converted to bagpipes or bassoons.

June 22.—Refreshed, as may be expected under the circumstances lastly detailed, the four Friends arose, and breakfast was served to the old tune of eggs and bacon; but Brown's appetite had grown fastidious, and hankered after the flesh-pots of *Maidstone*. Mrs. Haygrass's larder, however, contained no luxury of that description, the warm weather having, for a time, banished meat therefrom, and my friend's cravings were in some measure appeased, at his own request, by some potatoes rescued from yesterday's dinner. The vegetable breakfast, however, did not seem to agree with him, as none of the usual scintillations

of his wit were observable till he was provided with a more generous diet. This *desideratum* Robinson did his best to supply at dinner, which consisted of ——; but I am tired of these gastronomical details—'*du lit à la table, de la table au lit*': suffice it therefore to say, that the Bill of fare would not be half so interesting to my readers as the reality was to the partakers of it. I now follow the Ramblers to *Glenthorne*, the route to which they commenced by crossing the Lyndale Bridge by the Lyndale Hotel. The hills over which the road lay are said to be lovely in fine weather, but on this occasion they were enveloped in a cloud of *mist*. This, though doubtless it shrouded many a fair landscape from them, had the effect of exhibiting a phenomenon, not unknown perhaps to Mountaineers, but quite new to my companions, who therefore termed it a Devonshire *mirage*. It had the *usual* effect of magnifying anything seen through it; but instead of apparently approximating the object, as generally experienced, it seemed to remove it farther from the beholder, so that a sheep seen at, say 100 yards off, appeared much more *distant*, and yet as large as a Donkey.

As I have not made Optics my study, I shall not attempt to account for this illusion on the principles of that science; but it occurs to me, as I am writing, that the *mirage* might have

reflected the figure of one of the Gazers, which, through the haze, he might have mistaken for the last-mentioned *Quadruped*. I advise anyone interested in the problem not to rely on my solution of it, but to try the experiment for himself, and I wish him better success than my friends seemed to have had.

On the summit of these hills lies *Countesbury*, a village consisting of about half-a-dozen dwelling-houses of primitive aspect, a church, an infant school-room, and, of course, a house of public entertainment. The latter rejoices in the cognisance of *The Blue Bottle*, which some of the Travellers assumed was selected for its musical associations, and the notion was confirmed by another of them having, in a former Devonshire tour, met with a Sign of equally harmonious import, viz. *The Cat and Fiddle*; but they found themselves in error on casually espying the portraiture of an unmistakeable bottle of goodly proportions swinging over their heads on a kind of gibbet. Its colour, however, I cannot call *true* blue—*weather-beaten* or *invisible* blue describes it better. To avoid being personal, I shall take the liberty of borrowing a name for the Lady President of this hotel from *Ten Thousand a Year*, knowing that from such a treasure-heap the trifle will not be grudged or missed. In justice, however, I should disclaim the plagiarism

in favour of my friend Brown, who, I hope, will not object to bear half the blame of it, and with his leave, I now introduce the lady as *Mrs. Squallop.* We have no right to scan other folk's peculiarities, particularly those of the fair sex, unless they bear the stamp of elegance, or something engaging, which was not the case with Mrs. S. I shall content myself, therefore, with saying that her figure was *veritable* Great Western, and her dialect of the broadest Devonshire gauge.

Should any of my acquaintance be troubled with an overflow of animal spirits, I advise them to make Countesbury their abode for a few weeks, the sombre appearance and death-like stillness of which could not fail to prove a sovereign remedy.

Assisted by directions from a few wayfarers, the Tourists found their way to *Glenthorne.* This is the residence of Mr. Halliday, and is quite as romantic a Retreat as its name would lead one to imagine. It is between six and seven miles from Lynmouth, and situate in a lovely dell, bounded on three sides by sloping hills, and on the other, commanding a view of the Bristol Channel, with the Welsh Mountains in the distance.

The path leading to Glenthorne from the high road, winds and undulates through glades and over hills richly adorned with coppice and trees of all sizes and of every fantastic shape, and

reflected from the placid surface of the ponds which Nature herself has here supplied, as if to give a finish to the lovely landscape. These ponds, as well as the Lyn, swarm with Trout, making this a spot where old *Izaak Walton*, who loved rural scenery as much as fishing, would have revelled, and have almost dropped his angle in admiration of the beauties around him, exclaiming, perhaps, in some lines of one of his contemporaries, just occurring to me—

'Oh, how happy here 's our leisure!
'Oh, how innocent our pleasure!
'O ye valleys! O ye mountains!
'O ye groves and crystal fountains!
'How I love, at liberty,
'By turns to come and visit ye.'

Apropos of Fish—Do they ever sleep? If those which inhabit the restless waters of the Lyn don't, it cannot be from want of rocking.

While they were at Glenthorne the party took a walk round Mr. Halliday's garden, which they much enjoyed; not only as it gratified their horticultural *penchans*, but as it gave them an opportunity of enlightening each other by some sage criticisms on the skill and taste of the head Gardener, and on the architecture of *Glenthorne House*.

The return to Lynmouth lay over a path through a wood, the former being flanked by a

deep ditch, on the yonder side of which was a rich display of Ferns in great variety. This was a temptation too strong for the Botanist Jones's reverence for the Tenth Commandment, and prompted him to possess himself of some of them; but in attempting to stride the stream his footing gave way, and he met with a cooling reception at the bottom, accompanied by a fair supply of the *débris* of the opposite bank on his head. Having been fished out into his natural element, but in evil case, and still *in weeds*, he joined his companions in their homeward course, when the sun suddenly emerged from a dark cloud, as if on purpose to raise his temperature and his spirits at the same time. For the same humane purpose, and for the refreshment of all, they repeated their call at *The Blue Bottle* as they passed through Countesbury, depending on a draught of cider; but this, although the general Devonshire beverage, was found lacking, and some bottled beer, by no means elevating, was substituted; with a very different effect, however, from that of the juice of the apple on thirsty throats. I regret that whatever else I might say of this hotel would be of the like negative character, except that the sketch I have before given of the sign would, without much caricature or allowing anything for crinoline, serve pretty well for the hostess.

On their arrival at Lynmouth, dinner awaited them, and they soon made a shoulder of lamb look very small. This accomplished, bathing was proposed, and forthwith carried into execution, the objections before referred to being waived without further debate. For the guidance of *al fresco* Bathers, I beg to mention that the only place at Lynmouth suitable for them is about half a mile north of the village, and that they must cross the bridge in their way to it. At the spot I mean there is a considerable area of fine sand, visible at ebb-tide, but all the rest of the beach is so shingly as to keep you in perpetual motion, and very awkward motion too, barefooted —something like that of a bear learning to dance. On this occasion Robinson, tempted by the buoyancy of the salt water, swam out farther than was prudent, and in attempting to return, found, to his dismay, that he was making no progress, but, on the contrary, was being carried by the power of the tide and the waves nearer and nearer to the village, in deep water. Being, however, a tolerably expert swimmer, he managed by extra exertion to reach the beach at last, but at some hundred feet wide of the point at which he left his companions. Like John Gilpin,

'He little thought when he set out
'Of running such a rig.'

His companions, who had been watching his aquatic manœuvres and waiting his return, congratulated him on landing; and, without giving him due credit for his swimming powers, chaffed him by saying he should no longer be called Robinson, but Robinson Crusoe, as, like him, he had been *cast* ashore, though not on so desert a spot. In 'sober sadness,' however, I advise my more juvenile friends, not much accustomed to sea-bathing, to bear Robinson's admonition in mind, and not to swim out far when the tide is ebbing, the power of which makes it very difficult to return. It is safer to swim near and parallel to the beach, 'hugging the shore,' as sailors say. You will then also avoid under currents, should there be any. A fish of the *Crustacea* tribe abounds among the rocks in this locality—I mean the *Periwinkle*—a fact which, although it may at first appear insignificant, is of importance in my Narrative, inasmuch as it is connected with a serious accident which happened to *Smith*, with whom the pursuit of the Periwinkle is a favourite sport. Returning along the beach, that gentleman eyed those Crustaceans hanging in tempting clusters from the rocks over which he was scrambling, and in his eagerness to secure some, his Watch escaped, and fell into the water, in which the rocks were half immersed. His piscatorial propensity was now directed to the watch, which,

I am happy to say, was, after more paddling than patience, at length recovered; but on clapping it to his ear, the owner pathetically exclaimed, 'It's as mute as a Periwinkle!' They now returned, and laid the spoils of the chase, in which all had joined, at the feet, or rather in the larder, of their hostess, with the request that they might appear in proper form for the evening repast. The exercise of the day being deemed insufficient to ensure a night's sleep, another walk was proposed over the hills I have mentioned as running inland from the coast range above Lynmouth. On the summit of one of these is a little Summer-house or Look-out, which the party made for, through brake and through briar, till they came to a perfect labyrinth of crooked lanes, leading one into the other, and which at length debouched at the foot of the hill to which they were journeying. This presented a formidable obstacle to their farther progress; for, although clothed with verdure, it was on this side nearly perpendicular; but the pluck so characteristic of the men of Kent sustained them, and enabled them, with 'Excelsior' for their motto, to gain the top; and I am happy to say without any of those disasters which befel them in their former mountain ascent.

Here a most enchanting scene presented itself. Immediately before, was a perfect bird's-eye view

of the village of Lynmouth, but in miniature, with its inhabitants dwarfed in proportion, so that

> 'The fishermen that walk upon the beach
> 'Appear like mice.'

In close proximity to the village lay the beautiful valley of the Lyn, with that river, in its brightness, meandering through it, forming a background to the living picture. On the right, ranges of hills and cliffs stretched out as far as the eye can reach, sloping down to the margin of the sea in wood and 'verdure clad,' opening now and then to afford a glimpse of the Lyn; and in front, lay expanded the majestic Ocean, calm and smooth as a mirror, reflecting the bright rays of a setting sun, while the *Revenue Cutter* with her gilded sails seemed to sleep as she glided by beneath. Indeed, from the silence which reigned, the whole scene might be called one of still life—a second *Sleepy Hollow*, but for the sea-birds which flitted to and fro; and they, by their lazy, noiseless flight, seemed loath to quit it.

As if surfeited with the picturesque, the Tourists sought relief by rolling large boulders down the precipice, and watching the boundings of each over the furze brakes and other obstacles in its downward course—*mole ruit suâ*—classical pastime! They then returned to their rooms, quite disposed for the enjoyment of a night's repose,

which, it will be remembered, was the main object of their ramble.

Requiescant in pace.

June 23.—This being Sunday, the party with one accord took the too-prevalent liberty of lying in bed later than usual, and half-past nine scarcely sufficed them to assemble at breakfast. The wonted devoirs, however, were paid to it by all except Brown, whose appetite, it will be remembered, had become somewhat fastidious. He was therefore indulged with a few periwinkles—part of the spoils of yesterday's sport — accompanied by bread and thick cream, by way of alterative. All then went to Lynton Church, which, although a mile distant, was the nearest, climbing the almost precipitous hill before mentioned, leading to it from Lynmouth; and Smith facetiously remarking, as he toiled up, that any one would know Lynton was in the diocese of Exeter, the Church was so *High*. I shall not comment here on the Sermon, as Smith is the only one who took notes, and of these, perhaps, he will allow me to avail myself in a subsequent Edition, *when called for*.

After an early dinner, the afternoon being fine, they devoted a part of it to reading, on the sands; but Brown and Jones, not being bookishly inclined (no doubt from having overtasked their powers of attention by previous studies), strolled down the

beach, *tête-à-tête*, as if meditating on some interesting question, such as 'What are the wild winds saying?'

As it had been agreed to visit *Waters' Meet* in the evening, Tea and (at Brown's request) the residue of the periwinkles were ordered and produced. By special invitation Robinson joined his friends in their crustacean treat, but found it *sharp* work to keep pace with their more practised and dexterous fingers, the approved method of removing *winkles* from their shells being to pick them out with a pin. These slimy luxuries appeared to Robinson more 'plague than profit,' and he quickly resigned his portion with a feeling partaking somewhat of disgust.

The fame of the spot they were now about to visit had reached them before they left Kent; they were therefore on the tip-toe of expectation.

Waters' Meet, about two miles from Lynmouth, is so called from its being the point at which two streams called the East and West Lyn *meet*. These two streams come tumbling down steep and rugged hills, through a woodland combe or ravine, noisily leaping over the great boulders in their channel like rollicking twins, dancing to their own hoarse music till they arrive at the Meet, where they shake hands together and form *the* river Lyn, which then rapidly meanders to the Lynmouth beach, and finally loses itself in the sea:

'Down all the rocks the torrent roars;
'Away its hurrying waters break,
'Faster and whiter dash and curl,
'Till down yon dark abyss they purl.'

Mr. Halliday has also a pretty residence at Waters' Meet; and the scenery around it, independently of the river, is very pretty, though peculiar. Every picture, I suppose, should have a background, but this has none; for the dell is so closely shut in on all sides by woods that there is no looking through, and you feel, like Sterne's starling, that you 'can't get out.'

Jones, Robinson, and Smith, however, penetrated one of the walls of this woodland prison in further search of the picturesque; but although they were gratified by their exploration, they found nothing to surpass, if to equal, Glenthorne and Waters' Meet. Returning, they met Brown 'in merry pin,' who said, in classic phrase, that the old woman who was in care of the house, and who appeared to be the presiding nymph of the place, 'had been blowing him up like a pickpocket for being about the premises at that time of night.' It was not long before his friends had an opportunity of joining in his mirth, for the 'weird sister' was soon *down upon them* all, giving her opinion that 'a parcel of boys had no business to be tramping about the country at that time of night,' and appeared half-inclined to scare them

with the big dog at her side, evidently ready for a spring. Robinson and Smith, however, showed how superior their manners were to the old lady's by taking their leave with no other courtesy than laughing in her face. So the parties did not separate on much better terms than they met. They were subsequently informed that their reception was the same as all visitors to Waters' Meet experienced unless the old woman with the big dog was previously propitiated by a *douceur*. I mention this as a memento to other travellers this way, whose memories or portemonnaies may not be more capacious than those of Brown, Jones, & Co. Smith, suspecting the real state of the case, and determining not to be outdone by an old woman, amused himself by pouring oil on the flame of her wrath, telling her that he was much disappointed in the place, and assuring her that if she had nothing better to show visitors *he* would never come there again.

On their return to Lynmouth, before retiring for the night, they informed their hostess that they intended leaving Lynmouth the next morning, and consulted her as to the best mode of conveyance; but her ideas on that subject did not comport with their pockets—her talk being of horses and carriages, evidently wishing her Guests to leave her mansion in style.

June 24.—The morning, as if made to order, was bright and clear, and the sun-lit sea, rippled by a gentle breeze, seemed to return their salutation with a smile, as the Travellers bade it farewell. Their sojourn at Lynmouth had been so agreeable that they left it with considerable regret, which was not lightened by the reflection that they were parting from their hostess, whom they 'might never see again.' This thought had evidently passed through *her* mind—she looked so dejected as she bade the party good-bye!—expressing a hope, at the same time, that any or all of them would revisit her house on their 'wedding trip,' which they promised faithfully to do, should the happy occasion ever arrive.

The object of their next visit was *Ilfracombe*, and on their journey thither they kept the coast road for a considerable distance, and then passed again through the *Valley of Rocks*, and the grounds adjoining *Lea Abbey*. On their walk they enquired the way of a *Joskin*, who replied with so much circumlocution, and in such broad Devonshire, about ghéàtes, and léànes, and zign-póàsts, &c., as puzzled more than informed, and it would puzzle my readers still more were I to enter into the details. I shall, therefore, merely mention that the Tourists were told that they 'must keep straight avoore, and then turn to the left; than goo on till ye do come to a zign-póàst, and he'll

tell ye which way to goo; than keep on to the left again till ye do come to a ghéàt, but ye must n't goo dru he, but keep on to the left again till ye do come to a whaite ghéàt, and ye must goo dru he.' Thus enlightened, they proceeded, depending more on their own organs of locality than on their Directory, and, after a good deal of boggling, came out into the right road for Ilfracombe, without going through the 'whaite ghtéà.'

At this point there is a magnificent view of the sea, with a long range of coast, and also a picturesque little village, consisting of a few white cottages, which, with the smoke curling from their chimneys, stood out in agreeable relief to the dark green foliage of the woods in the background, the white sea-gulls, in their gyrations, giving the finishing touch to the picture.

After a trudge over dusty hills and through shady lanes, the latter being proverbially long and crooked in Devonshire, two villages, called *Martinhoe* and *Stattenslade* were passed, at the latter of which places the Wanderers needed direction as to their onward course; but no living being was visible except half-a-dozen Geese, which they did not think much wiser than themselves, and therefore asked them no questions. I was struck with the paucity of inhabitants in this locality, which seems inconsistent with the high state of cultivation of the latter. One would think that

the red Deer which formerly abounded here had driven them out; but I understand that the contrary is the fact, and that the inhabitants have nearly driven the Deer out, or killed them.

Without giving a particular description of any of the scenery passed in this walk, of which, however, it is highly deserving, I shall merely remark that it is very beautiful, and much diversified by the frequent windings of the road, and occasional glimpses of the channel till you come to *Trentishoe.* This village consists of a few straggling cottages, requiring no special notice; but I must not omit to mention the Church there, which is the most diminutive I ever saw, except that of St. Lawrence, in the Isle of Wight. The devotion of the inhabitants, I hope, is in inverse proportion to the size of their place of worship. On enquiring for an inn where they could slake their thirst with a glass of cider, they were answered by the question, 'Where be ye gwain?'—Answer: 'To Combe Martin.'—Reply: 'Than there 's a public houze half a mile vurder on, called "The Hunter's Rest."'

After marching a mile and a half (Kentish measure), they arrived at that Resting-place, convinced that Devonshire miles were quite as long, in proportion, as the lanes. During their brief stay here they discovered that 'The Hunter's Rest' had actually been visited before, as they lighted on the cards of several commercial tra-

vellers, who had further advertised themselves by their autographs in the windows.

From this point they crossed various hills towards *Combe Martin*, which afforded much and varied woodland and mountain scenery, as well as a distant view of *Exmoor*.

Arrived at Combe Martin, quite ready for refreshment, they enquired of the first Bumpkin they met the name of the head inn, and the way to it, who replied, with a broad grin, 'There's plenty o' eens in Combe Martin, but the head un 's straight avoore.' This communication being accompanied by a peal of laughter from the Spokesman's fellow-louts, it is probable that they discovered something as amusing in the costume of the Interrogators as in the reply of their friend —particularly the hats, which were grown rather 'seedy.'

Combe Martin lies in a valley, or combe (as it is called in the West of England), which opens picturesquely on a bay, walled in on all sides by rocks. The only Lion observed in Combe Martin is the Church, which is handsome, and worthy the attention of those who have time to bestow on it, which my Friends had not. Silver was found, and mines were worked in this neighbourhood formerly, but there are no *diggings* there now. *Laver* is gathered on this beach at low water, and is not only used as an article of food by the poor,

but is esteemed a wholesome delicacy at the tables of their *Betters*. It may be superfluous to add that *Bishop Jewel* was born at Combe Martin.

At the 'King's Arms,' the tip-top hotel of Combe Martin, Robinson, with due regard to the Commissariat, addressed himself to the *Lady-in-waiting* in interrogatories touching eatables; but, as Dr. Johnson said on a similar occasion, 'of the provisions, the negative catalogue was very copious;' for, after running the gamut of the Larder with the Damsel from ducks and green peas downward, without a single sound in the affirmative, it at last ended in eggs and bacon *flat*, which was but doleful music to the sensitive ear of Brown. In complaisance to his known antipathy to the last-mentioned viands, the *séjour* at Combe Martin was but brief, Brown and Jones starting for Ilfracombe, while their two stouter-stomached companions refreshed themselves with bread and butter. After an agreeable, but rather fatiguing march over hill and dale, for some miles, the Pedestrians *joined company* a little short of Ilfracombe, and entered that place together, where rooms were procured at a small grocery establishment, affording a perspective view of the harbour through a lane or alley in which the gallant *Rodney* is publicly rewarded for his services by swinging on the Sign-post of an inn. This affair being settled, they repaired to *Rappary Cove* on

the beach, and, having waited awhile for the recession of the tide, they refreshed themselves in the *Briny*; after which, at the pressing invitation of some rough-looking sailor boys, they had a trip in a boat, and about 10 P.M. were landed close to their temporary abode.

June 25.—Brown and Smith being rather foot-sore this morning, were indisposed for walking, particularly as it was showery; but the weather improving about noon, Jones and Robinson were induced to walk to *Twitchen*, in the village of *Morthoe* (provincially pronounced *Morte*), about six miles distant, to visit an acquaintance of Robinson's residing there. Their route lay over hills clothed and redolent with heather, and through smiling valleys, so characteristic of Devonshire that I need not describe them. Jones, being fatigued with his six-mile march, and thinking perhaps that his return must be now or never, turned his back, for the first time, on his friend, leaving him to find his way back to Ilfracombe by short cuts through hedges and ditches and farm-yards, alone. Robinson was disappointed in not finding his friend at *Twitchen*, but was hospitably received there by a *Locum tenens*, and on his return, found his three Companions complacently, or rather lazily, awaiting him. Indignant at their sloth, he endeavoured to stir

them up by drawing their attention to the merits of some plaster Statuettes of shepherdesses and their swains on the mantle-shelf, remarking that he thought them worthy of a position in the International Exhibition of 1862, particularly as they were of the Arcadian type. Brown objected to the knee-breeches and long stockings of the Shepherds, and to the want of crinoline in the young Ladies' costume, and set to work by attiring them after his own devices, and coquetting with the shepherdesses till he broke some of their noses, and their hearts, too, for aught I know. This evening Jones asked Robinson how the money market stood; who replied, 'Rather *tight*.' 'No wonder,' said Brown, 'considering how long we 've been on the *loose*.' Smith—'We could not expect from such a Trip as ours anything but small profits.' Jones—'Then it 's clear we should have a quick *Return*.'

The remainder of the evening was occupied in watching a Steamer about to return with a numerous freight of Excursionists to *Swansea*, and in sauntering round the harbour. Being no Engineers, the amusement soon lost its interest, and they repaired to their rooms for the night; but, although quite disposed to sleep, they were disappointed of that luxury, not by the too common cause of yelping curs, or the squalling of cats, to which they could have bid defiance, but by a

Baby with such Stentorian lungs as to prove an annoyance during the whole of the night.

This was, of course, appealed against in the morning; but the only redress they obtained was the Mother's telling them that the 'dear child' was teething, and that '*you* were all Babies once, and cried as much as he.' There was no answering this; besides, they knew that Ladies will always 'have the last word, if they die for 't.' This is a good opportunity for leaving Ilfracombe; but, previously to taking leave, I will lay aside my anger anent the fractious baby, and say a few words relative to the Town. It was seen, however, to great disadvantage, as it rained during the greater part of the sojourn there, which must be my apology for a very meagre description.

Ilfracombe is surrounded by hills and cliffs on all sides, except coastwise, having a beach somewhat picturesque, and very convenient for bathing, which I believe is its chief attraction to visitors; with which may be coupled what are generally called public Baths, but which I prefer denominating *private* ones. I have already alluded to the harbour, but as it was raining and getting dark when I visited it, I can say but little about it, except that it appeared well protected by rocks, and very convenient for small Craft.

The Church has a very ancient aspect, and is pleasantly located; but as, somehow or other,

the party never went to Church except on Sundays, I can say nothing of the interior, except commending all visitors, and others concerned, to the same, and to anything that may be said or sung as well as seen therein.

June 26.—Stop, my Friends, you can't leave Ilfracombe yet awhile; it is raining in torrents and blowing great guns. A pretty day this for a party of pleasure, and so near Midsummer, too! However, although you are sans 'books or works or healthful play,' there 's a semi-intoxicated German Band within hearing, to keep up your spirits. From this source, though none of the purest, they were regaled with mediocre attempts at 'The Power of Love,' 'All among the Barley,' and other equally spirit-stirring melodies. This entertainment over, they were on their beam ends for want of employment, and lamented that they had not supplied themselves on leaving home with some cotton and needles, with which to mend their stockings, or perform some other fancy work.

In this dearth of amusement, a gentleman in the guise of a Cobbler came to their relief on the housetop opposite, and level with their window. His visits were so frequent that it was thought at first they were for devotional purposes; but that was a mistake, understand, as was evident by his calling the attention of the Passers-by to the most

prominent feature in his face in the most approved style, and by other equally 'fantastic tricks.'

Whether these elegances were above my Friends' comprehension I cannot say, but they soon lost their interest in them, and they were not sorry to exchange them for dinner. The latter was in due course followed by Tea; soon after which Brown and Smith, worn out by *ennui*, betook themselves to their beds. Jones and Robinson, however, being of a more patient temperament, whiled away an hour or so in hopes of improved weather by a perusal of Jones's favourite periodical—*The London Journal*—containing, *à l'ordinaire*, sundry interesting articles 'to be continued;' and their patience was rewarded by a tolerably favourable evening. Of this they availed themselves about 9 A.M. by a walk on the Promenade round the cliff. This Lounge being like most others of the same genus, I shall say nothing except a word of advice to Gentlemen promenaders who don't use elastic to their hats, and to ladies with distended crinolines—*Prenez garde*! They then paid a visit to the Tunnel Bathing places, which, I believe, are appropriated exclusively to the fair sex—I should think to give them an opportunity for catching cold, which in these draughty places they can get at the small cost of one halfpenny each. Jones and Robinson paid their *pence* to 'walk up,' but of course did not bathe. With

this I make my bow to Ilfracombe, adding one wish on behalf of myself and my Friends, viz. that on our second visit it may not rain as it did on this—from 'morn till dewy eve.'

June 27.—The weather this morning proving propitious, the Travellers packed up their *materiel*, paid their 'little account,' and left Ilfracombe for *Morte Point*, *Baracombe*, and the *Woolacombe Sands* (the terminus of their Tour), intending to take Kentisbury, a village somewhat inland, on their journey home, and to sleep there. They took the coast road, leading, as I think I have before mentioned, along the summits of the hills which nearly surround Ilfracombe, from whence, towards the East, there is an enchanting prospect and a fertile country, diversified by beautiful valleys and rich woodlands, and towards the West a magnificent view of the Sea, the cliffs facing which present a great variety of brilliant colours well worthy the attention of a Painter—the whole forming such a landscape as Devonshire alone, in my opinion, can afford. The Sea-gulls, the usual appendages of marine scenery, wing their airy flight around in great abundance, making the beholder almost wish, at the risk of his reputation, to be one of the same fraternity, that he might have a genuine *bird's-eye* view of the whole.

Passing on, the Travellers came to the little

village of *Lea*; shortly before entering which their attention was attracted by several small undulating woodland Valleys in such close contiguity to each other that they would seem to have overgrown themselves till they formed one, but for the occasional gleaming of a little streamlet which meanders between them. 'T is a pretty picture,' said my Uncle Toby, but it pales before the reality of that seen from the hills around Ilfracombe.

I begin to fear that my Readers' patience must be exhausted by the frequent demands made on it by my attempts at description. For a pen like mine, however, to fail in describing such scenery as that in which Devonshire is so rich, is nothing more than might be expected; for that of a Scott or a Southey could scarcely do it justice.

Their walk towards *Morte Point* gave the Excursionists another glimpse at *Morthoe*, which Village presented nothing interesting except the Church, to which I must pay the tribute of a passing remark. It is a very ancient edifice, but lately restored, and well worth the attention of travellers. It is said to have been founded by *De Tracey*, one of the murderers of Thomas à Becket, and the former is supposed to be buried there. The object of their visit to Morte Point was a sight of a *Cromlech*, of which it is said it can never be removed but by the combined

strength of all the wives in Devonshire who reign over their husbands; and as my inquisitive friends failed in discovering the object of their curiosity, they presumed such a combination had taken place and succeeded. This, however, I much doubt, and am more inclined to think that the Tourists missed the object of their search through carelessness or imperfect topographical information, and that the Druidical Relic is still *in statu quo.* The next visit was to Baracombe Bay, the beach of which abounds in a great variety of shells and sea Anemones, and the sale of them serves to eke out the existence of a few old women of Morthoe. Many of these shells are very elegant in form, but so minute as to puzzle one to think how their inhabitants could have got into them, as much as it did *George III.* to account for the apple getting into the dumpling. It was not from want of being asked that they did not purchase some sea Anemones, but they had no conveyance for them except their knapsacks; and, although it is said '*there's nothing like Leather,*' it was considered that those nondescript substances would stick so close to that article on their journey home that they might have too much of a good thing; so the investment was declined.

While hunting among the weeds, for no game in particular, Robinson found a nearly full-grown crab *sitting.* It soon, however, sidled off, full tilt,

and nearly distanced his pursuer, but the latter at length headed him, and stopped his career by treading on his back. In securing his prize, Robinson unfortunately used his left hand, and was reminded of the mistake by such a grip round the thumb from one of the claws of his new Acquaintance, that he would gladly have shaken him off. Where there is a will there is generally a way, but that is not always the case, nor was it in this instance. Robinson had caught a Tartar, and a Tartar had caught *him*, and wouldn't let him go. While he was writhing with pain, his companions evinced their sympathy by peals of laughter, and by assuring him they were sorry he had married a *Crab*; but that there was no relief for him except the Divorce Court. The sufferer's patience being worn out by pain and the unmerciful merriment of his friends, he dealt his Tormentor such a blow with the heavy end of his walking-stick as sent his body and bones flying in all directions, and Robinson was his own man again.

Brown, now seeing nothing more to laugh at in his friend, endeavoured to keep up the joke by improvising the following ditty, by which he got as much laughed at himself. He sang and composed it simultaneously, keeping time with his feet as he marched about the beach in the *goose-step*; his voice at the same time resembling that bird's much more than the Swan's. It will be

perceived by the measure, but by nothing else, that the *Minstrel Boy* had one of the Irish melodies in his mind at the time of his inspiration, and also that he made free with the *facts* of the crab adventure; but the latter he called a '*Licentia poetæ.*'

The *Maidstone Boy* to the sea is gone,
  Midst the rocks and weeds you 'll find him;
His ancient boots he has just pulled on,
  And a shrimp-net slung behind him.
From the dripping weeds, as he stumbled on,
  A Crab rushed off in terror;
But the treach'rous net, like Nessus' cloak
  Around him, showed his error.

The Maidstone boy had caught a Crab,
  But he 'd also caught a Tartar,
Which fastened tight to the sportsman's thumb,
  To feel what he was arter.
He had seized the game in his sinister hand,
  Which proved a painful blunder;
But he raised on high his pond'rous staff,
  And smashed the Crab asunder.

When the enchantment of the minstrelsy was somewhat dissolved, the party proceeded for the *Woollacombe Sands*, which lay in prospect expanded before them. These sands, whose attractions are well known to all travellers in Devonshire, presented such a temptation to bathing as was not to be resisted, and was accordingly yielded to. The dip was most enjoyable, as was a subsequent walk on the beautiful sands.

Robinson then prevailed on his companions to accompany him to *Twitchen*, in the hope of seeing his friend residing there. This visit, unfortunately, like the former one, was unsuccessful. With much regret, therefore, at missing their friend, they bent their steps towards *Kentisbury*, their journey to which place (22 miles) was manfully performed on the strength of a few hard biscuits, some bread and butter procured at a turnpike-gate, and bread and cheese at a roadside inn. Such hardihood and disregard of creature comforts did these enterprising Travellers display in their voyage of discovery! The architecture and appearance of Kentisbury have but few claims on my pen. I must therefore request my readers to be content with being informed that it consists of a number of cottages, so distant from each other, that there seemed to be no relationship between them, and scarcely to deserve the name of a village. It being between 8 and 9 P.M. by the time the party reached the nearest of these straggling huts, their first care was to procure a *bivouac*.

For this purpose they secured, for a trifling *douceur*, the services of a small girl, who chaperoned them to 'the *very best* public-house in all Kentisbury,' called *The Blue Ball*. I don't doubt the justice of the girl's praise of this Retreat, but it certainly did not come up to the standard of *The Great Western* or *The Prince of Wales* at

Paddington. The Travellers' recent experience, however, having taught them better than to be fastidious, they soon made themselves at home by ensconcing themselves in the *Settle* of *The Blue Ball* kitchen, among the rural guests there assembled, and smoking their pipes. Their application for beds was replied to by the landlady's assurance that she had but one spare room, but after a little private converse with Robinson, *mine Hostess* promised two, at the same time giving him to understand that some of her family would have to turn out for their accommodation. Robinson being again *re-settled*, one of the guests commenced a conversation with him, which ran somewhat after this manner. Farmer: 'Travellers, I suppose, gentlemen?'—Rob.: 'Yes, uncommercial Travellers.'—Farmer: 'What, all?' Rob.: 'Yes, all four.'—Farmer: 'What *lain*, and make zo bold?'—Rob.: 'Doing a little in the railway line.'—Farmer: 'There, I thort zo much, for I heerd Squire ——— zay t'other day that a railway was comin' all the way down from Bristol by the zey-zide, but *I* shall never live to zee it.' From engineering the conversation took a more philosophical turn, the Rustic remarking, that railways seemed 'to be turning the Wordle upzide down'—that 'zome volk do zay that the Wordle gooth round the zun, but I'm sure a don't, for this parish ha'n't moved these

sixty years, I know, vor I've hardly been out of un for that time, and if the Wordle *had* turned round the zun, I s'pose I and all the parish should a gone round wi' un.' The Tourists, despairing of winning any laurels in an argument in which their antagonist could thus annihilate the Copernican system with one blow, declined the contest by expressing a hope that the world would remain quiet at Kentisbury *for ever and ever*. Assured by the tenor of the philosopher's lecture that their slumbers were in no danger of any terrestrial disturbances, the Tourists retired to their dormitories, which were comfortable although small, and one of them was rendered still smaller by having a number of well-filled sacks in it, as if used for a temporary Granary. At these Brown looked very suspiciously, as if he had the fear of the 'Forty Thieves' before his eyes, and then fell to kicking them with all his might, until he saw, by the light he thereby let in, that they contained nothing but wheat.

June 28. — The line chalked out for this day's *stampede* was to Porlock, a border village of Somersetshire, viâ Lynmouth, a distance of about 22 miles, which my heroes, whose sinews began to feel overstretched, did not contemplate with much complacency, although they had nothing to regret in quitting such an out-of-the-

world place as Kentisbury. With willing minds, therefore, but not with willing feet, they turned 'their travelled steps' from it soon after breakfast. An incident occurred just before starting, which, though not particularly interesting to any but the parties immediately concerned, I am unwilling, as a faithful Chronicler, to omit. While Robinson was engaged in the financial concerns of the party, his three companions were drawn aside by some beautiful white *moss roses* growing in an adjoining garden, with which they then and there ornamented their vain and empty buttonholes. At this juncture a man made his appearance panoplied in a suit of kingly *cord* tied tightly round his wrists and ancles, a pair of thick hedging-gloves on his hands, and a black crape veil fastened over his head and face. This being a novel apparition to the three Stragglers, they stood aghast, as if they had met with a Gorilla, and wondered what it meant; but gradually gaining courage, they collected round the Knight of the black helmet, and were soon enlightened as to the cause of his appearance, by seeing him proceed to secure a swarm of Bees by 'driving' them from the old hive to a new one. In this operation many of them, in which the *amor patriæ* is particularly strong, refuse to be driven, and not being easily *led*, they take to flight for a time, singing 'Home, *sweet* home' in the

ears of the Bystanders, and sometimes stinging them, if interrupted in their performances. This appears to have been the case now, for as the three Spectators hurriedly left the scene of action, two of them were observed to keep their hands close to their ears, as if they did not like the tune, and Brown hobbled after them, clasping one of his legs with both hands, and calling aloud to his companions to stop. Alarmed at his attitude, and at the disturbance of his usual serenity of countenance, all gathered round him, enquiring the cause, and were informed, in no very measured or complimentary terms, that a Bee had been 'creeping up his leg,' and stung him, but that he thought he had pinched it to death for its *pains*. This appeared probable, as, on searching for the Offender, nothing was found but its *sting*, which was sticking in the Sufferer's leg—a present which bees seldom fail to make on parting from those with whom they have been on terms of intimacy. In my Friend's case, perhaps it was meant as a gentle hint that his journey through life, like that through North Devon, possibly may not be *all* Honey. At all events, the occurrence serves me 'to point a moral to the tale,' and at the same time to remind the *Florist* of part of his catechism which he seemed to have forgotten, 'Keep your hands from picking and stealing,' and never laugh at your Friend in distress, as at Robinson yester-

day, lest *your* misfortune may be soon like *his*. The Patient being nearly recovered from the *attack* in his leg, but still rather *groggy on that pin*, they all got under march for Porlock, viâ Lynmouth. The road to the former place running, for the most part, along the summits and slopes of commanding hills, presented many beautiful views of the fertile valleys beneath, which demand a more graphic description than I can give them.

Being now more inland, the Tourists missed the sea-breezes; and being much oppressed by the heat of the day, they made a brief halt at *Paracombe*, and then pursued their course. Nothing particular occurred on their way to Lynmouth, except that Brown once gave a gentle whistle, which seemed to proceed from his *leg*, at which Robinson compassionately told him it was his own fault—that bees would not sting anybody who did not tease them, and that *Shenstone* used to keep lots of them, and seems never to have got stung, for he had said or sung—

> 'My banks they are *covered* with bees,
> 'Whose murmurs invite me to sleep;'

on which Brown remarked *he* could sleep much better without them.

The vicinity of Lynmouth was in due time recognised, presenting a new but most lovely aspect; as they were now approaching it by the

long ravine or valley called *Lyndale*, through which the Lyn, after skirting the village, flows into the sea. The hills on either side of this valley are lofty, with rather steep slopes; those on the right being clothed with brakes and heather, and those on the left with fine tall trees and thick brushwood, from base to summit.

On their arrival at Lynmouth, the Tourists' affection for Mrs. Haygrass seemed to return; but it soon approved itself to be only of the cupboard stamp: as, on calling at her house, they had no sooner exchanged salutations, than inquiries were commenced as to the state of the Larder, which resulted in an assurance that she could give them something for dinner that Mr. Brown would like better than eggs and bacon. She fulfilled her promise, for on their return from the Cobbler's, where they had been to have their boots fresh nailed, they were welcomed by a goodly spread of veal cutlets, served up in the old Lady's best style. It was well that they were sharp-set, for their repast might otherwise have been marred by the appearance of the hostess, during dinner, displaying a tempting Salmon Peal, caught that morning, but not cooked, and regretting that they had not come before it was bespoken.

As they were on the point of starting for *Porlock*, Mrs. H. told them that a Farmer in the house was going 'in a trap' to *Glenthorne*, who,

in his way thither, would take their knapsacks to *Countesbury*, through which they were to pass, and leave them there 'to be called for' by the owners. Having reached Countesbury before the Farmer, and consequently before their luggage, they waited for the latter, and availed themselves of the interval by renewing their acquaintance with *Mrs. Squallop*. By her fireside they had an opportunity of drying their garments, which had been saturated by another Fog they had met with in crossing the Countesbury hills, and in which they had been looking out for another *mirage*; but not with the same success as on their former observation, the more recent one being rewarded only by the appearance of a party of *Gulls*.

The fog having evaporated from their clothes by the kitchen fire, my Friends were conducted to the parlour by the hostess, who, on leaving it, dropped a curtsey, more rapid than graceful, following it up with 'Scoose me, gents, but what may you desire?' 'Some biscuits, Mrs. Squ——,' was the reply—the *Soubriquet* presenting itself to the tongue too readily to be well suppressed. The order having been executed, their attention was directed to the Decorations of the room. The principal, though by no means the only pictorial ornaments, were personifications of the cardinal Virtues—*Prudence*, *Temperance*, &c., and a Print representing *The Return of the Prodigal Son*,

none of which would disgrace *Leather Lane* or *Whitechapel.* The Hero of the latter piece was appropriately habited in a tattered smock-frock, met at the nether end by ragged leggings, with shoes to match, the whole being *crowned* (the expression is hardly admissible) by *a shocking bad hat.* The costume of the elder Gentleman was not less appropriate; but, as may be expected, more of the *holiday* or *dress type,* consisting of well-fitting tights, buckled at the knees, a light-coloured waistcoat of rather antique cut, exhibiting between the lappels an extensive frill, with which corresponded a pair of ruffles, displaying themselves at the cuffs of a tailed blue coat, and the *tout ensemble* surmounted and finished by a cocked hat. The mantel-shelf was tastefully, though not profusely ornamented, Gulls' eggs being its most conspicuous subjects of exhibition. On these Robinson, who is an Ornithologist, cast a longing eye, and offered Mrs. S. money for some of them; but she was proof against his temptation, and replied, 'Scoose me, sir, they are my daughter's; but if you will take the trouble to call on the School Missus, who don't live fur off, I 've no doubt you could be accommodated.' On this recommendation, Robinson, and also Jones, who is likewise addicted to Ornithology, visited the last mentioned lady, and effected a rather extensive, and, as they considered, advantageous Investment.

They then returned to the hotel, in the hope that the Farmer had arrived with their luggage. In this they were not disappointed, and they hastened to pack up the Eggs in their knapsacks, with the rest of their valuables. This, in their anxiety to proceed on their journey, appears to have been done in a somewhat perfunctory manner; as when they reached Porlock the interiors of their knapsacks were profusely enriched with ornithological Remains.

Although my Readers must be impatient to arrive at the end of this Narrative, perhaps they will excuse my returning to Countesbury for a moment, to record a trifling incident which occurred at *The Blue Bottle* just before the party left. They wished to present the Farmer with a trifle for carrying their luggage; but as there was no more 'animation in Consols' than when they were at Ilfracombe, they told him they would not offend him by offering money, and requested his acceptance of a draught of Beer, to which he assented, and a small pint bottle of that beverage was accordingly handed by the Landlady to him in his *Trap*. Whilst he was engaged in fingering the cork, the Hostess (glass in hand) was intent on initiating her four Guests into short cuts and by-paths to Porlock, and the beer being well *up*, propelled the cork with proportionate *momentum*, and unfortunately hit Mrs. Squallop point blank

on the proboscis, which happens to be rather prominent. On receiving her Adversary's fire, she immediately flared up and returned it with the rough side of her Tongue, which, judging from its volubility, must have been quite as long as her nose—abusing him for having done it on purpose to insult her before Company, wishing he might lose every drop of his beer, and furthering that wish by turning a deaf ear to his entreaties for the glass — the liquor all the while fizzing out of the bottle. Having resolved from the first to act on the principle of *non-intervention* with each other, the Tourists carried it out with respect to the Belligerents; leaving them on the Field to pursue their own journey. Whether the shot was accidental or malicious, I must decline giving an opinion; but one could n't help observing something like an aim taken by the assailant, and a twinkle of his eye indicative of something like 'roguery,' having reference, perhaps, to the smallness of the bottle of Beer. I hope, however, the Combatants made up the matter afterwards between themselves.

I must now bid adieu to Devonshire, and accompany my Friends across the Countesbury and Porlock Heaths, on which almost pathless Wilds they were pretty much in the position of their first Parents on quitting Paradise—'The world

was all before them where to choose,' &c. After gazing around a while they found that Mrs. S.'s directions as to short cuts, &c., related more to tracks of Turf Carts than to any paths available to themselves, and thinking that the former might prove (as short cuts often do) the longest way home, they disregarded them and took a straight course across, leaving *Glenthorne* on the Left.

When about half-way over the former Common they were overtaken by rain, which continued during nearly the whole of the afternoon, damping the spirits nearly as much as the apparel of all except the amphibious Jones, who trudged on the faster, the heavier it rained, and seemed to flourish better in the water than on dry land. At the yonder side of Porlock Heath, by way of shortening their journey, they traversed a large field of mowing grass, but at the end of it they were *brought to grief* by a wide and deep Ditch, which compelled them, like the Israelites of yore, to wander back into the wilderness in search of a new track. In this dilemma they hallooed to two Labourers at a distance, and were pointed by them to a steep ploughed field. After conquering that and two or three more inclosures, they, about dusk, reached Porlock, wet through, and repaired to a small Public-house, to which they had been recommended by the Driver of a coach as it passed them on the Heath. Here they were huddled

into a small room, preoccupied by two other pedestrian Tourists; but finding a paucity of chairs, and not liking to make fresh acquaintances in the dark, Robinson, after administering a mixture of abuse and entreaty to the Host, succeeded in obtaining another sitting-room. He was less successful in his application for beds, for the Hostess answered it by saying she had but one for their accommodation in the house, but that he might probably procure another just opposite, if they would not mind the inconvenience of crossing the street. Having now so nearly accomplished their Tour without the necessity of sleeping four in one bed, at Midsummer, they acted on Mrs. Boniface's hint, and succeeded in obtaining another in an adjacent house.

Being rather jaded by the day's disagreeable walk, most of the party were rather out of humour; not with each other, but each with himself and with the weather—Smith complaining of blistered feet, and Brown and Robinson with they didn't know what—Jones being the only one who preserved his complacency, and *that* seemed irksome to him, for immediately after supper he betook himself to bed; and the rest soon followed his example. The dressing-table (so to speak) in the room occupied by Jones and Robinson was decorated with various *Tracts* admirably calculated to shed a cheerful light on

Christianity—such as 'Swearer's Prayers,' 'Hell Yawns for You,' and worthy of a dedication to his Flock—from the pen of 'The Rev. Dismal Horrors.'

I should mention that the usual approach to Porlock from Lynton is down a fine descent, commanding a view of an extensive Valley, in which the village is situate. This Valley, I understand, possesses much to be admired; but if so, all its attractions were this day too thickly shrouded in mist and rain to be visible.

June 29.—With three groans for Porlock, and by no means in good travelling condition, the Pedestrians resumed their homeward course, intending to make *Dunster* to-day, sleep there, and pass the Sunday. It is only about a ten miles' journey, but, with tender feet, that is too long to be agreeable. In this plight, and knowing that they had now left Devonshire, they thought more of accomplishing their day's march than of the scenery by which it was accompanied. Had the latter received more of their attention, perhaps it would have appeared tame after that of North Devon: even the romantic town of *Minchead* was passed with little notice, except that the hills in its vicinity were observed to be cultivated to their summits. Somersetshire, however, although by no means deficient in beautiful scenery, must yield

the palm, in this respect, to Devon—the former being more distinguished for the richness of its soil, and its general excellence as an agricultural County, than for the picturesque. It is, moreover, too short of abrupt changes of surface, sea-views, shining rivers, and perhaps waste lands, to vie with the sister Province in landscape. For this shortcoming Nature alone is accountable; and it is almost made amends for by the Somersetshire Farmers—evidences of whose skill and industry are traceable in the abundance of their crops, and the beauty of their cattle, throughout the county.

On arriving at *Dunster*, my Friends directed their lightened steps to *The Luttrell Arms* Hotel, where, notwithstanding their faded garb, they flattered themselves that there must be something of the aspect of Gentlemen yet about them, to account for the kind reception they met with at the hands of the host and hostess. The moment you enter this Hotel, you know it will be your own fault if you are not comfortable, and are disposed to say with Falstaff, 'Shall I not take mine ease in mine Inn?' After they had inspected and approved of their bedrooms, and dined, they inquired whether *Dunster Castle*, the Seat of Mr. Luttrell, were open to the Public, but found they could see the Gardens and pleasure Grounds only, and those not till Sunday evening. To prepare themselves for this visit and for Church the

next day, they repaired to one of the Shops for the purpose of redecorating their *Tiles* with new ribbons, which, after the dust and rain they had encountered, were much needed. At this *Magasin des modes* there was a larger assortment of violins, cheese, red-herrings, &c., than of the article they were in quest of; but after a long search by the Proprietress, and a great deal of noise made by her troublesome Customers, the latter were suited at last, and their hats so improved, that they talked of presenting them to their *Uncle* when they got to *Maidstone*. Quitting the shop, they were not much flattered on hearing an old woman, who was waiting for an ounce of snuff, remark, that she supposed they were 'young Fellows come down from *Oxford* to see the *Castle*,' but that they 'did n't do much credit to their College.' After amusing themselves till ten o'clock with some books found in their room, which I don't think it necessary to bring more prominently before my Readers, they retired to rest; but on entering their Dormitory, Jones and Robinson, with dismay, missed their knapsacks. It was not long before 'that little Wretch Brown' was suspected of having made away with them, and they were commencing a hue and cry after him, when a protuberance was observed in their bed, on examining which, it was discovered that it was caused by the missing Goods. A search after the cunning Fox was eluded

by his having *crept to earth*, or something like it, and bolted his door; by which means he escaped a good bolstering.

June 29 (Sunday).—The Party attended divine service in the morning at Dunster church, where they were accommodated with a spacious pew; but so high and aristocratic as much to impede the voice of the clergyman (the Rev. Mr. Luttrell), of whom, from the same cause, they could obtain but an occasional glimpse. The Church is a fine old building, but, from its antiquity, *capable of improvement*. The chancel appeared to be nearly filled with monuments, &c., of the Luttrell family. The afternoon was devoted to reading and talking over the intended movements of the morrow, till about five o'clock, when they called on the Dunster Castle gardener, who took them round the gardens. After seeing the Orange Trees, which (so mild is the climate of the West of England) here flourish in the open air, they were conducted along a splendid Yew Hedge, apparently fifty feet high, and so closely compacted as to give it the appearance of great antiquity. Their path then led them to an antique Bowling-green, beautifully carpeted with velvety 'new-shaven grass,' and fit for Fairies to dance on. The adjacent Grounds present several interesting views of the sea; and the Guide pointed out one particular part of the shore as perilous to

Bathers, on account of the suddenness of the Tide, and said that, about two years before, a young man met with a watery grave there on the day after his marriage, either from ignorance or regardlessness of the danger.

From these Grounds the magnificent hill, or rather Mountain, called *Dunkery Beacon*, is sure to catch the eye, at some miles' distance. It stands within the precincts of Somersetshire, and measures, at the base, twelve miles in circumference, and, as I was informed, about 1,700 feet in height, and is said to be the highest point of land in the county. It must command a fine view of the Sea, the mountains of Wales, and a large portion of the West of England; and the Tourists much regretted that time and distance prevented their paying it a visit, particularly as additional interest has been conferred on it by a circumstance mentioned by the Gardener, namely, that the '*Slappers* and *Minders* came down and pitched their Tent there during the Roossian war'—to make *observations*, I suppose. The only observation *I* shall make on the subject is, that I shouldn't have fancied being one of the party, having been used to a milder climate than is to be expected on the top of *Dunkery Beacon* in Winter.

Dunster Castle is a very fine old Baronial-looking edifice, commandingly situate, overlooking the Town, and has been for many generations, I under-

stand, the Residence of the present Owner and his ancestors.

The inspection of these gardens and grounds, and a stroll in some beautiful fields adjoining the hotel, close this day's Chronicle.

July 1.—This is the last day of my Journal. The Tourists had now before them a march to *Taunton* of twenty-one miles, over dusty roads, with feet which could not be warranted sound—two inconveniences which a cloudless sky and a scorching sun did not mitigate. But they had formed their resolution, and a consideration of the '*res angustæ*,' before alluded to, wonderfully fortified it; so off they started, but not without many regrets that this was the last day of their rambles together. Their spirits, however, were a little cheered by Smith and Jones—'*Arcades ambo*'—striking up the old lay of 'The Englishman,' and a dismal noise they made. And yet, the effect must have been of a somewhat martial character, as one of a knot of rustic Bystanders asked, as they passed, to what '*Ridgement*' they belonged; to which Smith replied, 'To no regiment at all. We are Organ-Grinders; will you come and be our Monkey?' This raised a shout of laughter among the Bumpkins, and put an end to the colloquy.

About midway between Dunster and Taunton,

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at a short distance on the left, the Quantock Hills run almost parallel with the road for several miles, till they are nearly lost sight of as they stretch away towards *Bridgewater*, overlooking that town, the Bristol Channel, and *Sedgemoor*, so well known as the Battle-field on which the pretensions of the *Duke of Monmouth* were annihilated. When within a few miles of Taunton, the limping party gladly availed themselves, for about a mile, of a lift in a rural vehicle, known in the west of England as a *Putt*, and which is generally used by Farmers (saving my Friends' dignity) for the purpose of conveying *miscellaneous mixtures calculated to enrich the soil.* The accommodation, however, was too brief for their waning strength, and, on alighting, they hobbled worse than before their ride. The heat and dust increasing, Smith became lamer and lamer—Jones was not much better; and it was nearly a case of *No Go* with all, when the appearance of the lofty and graceful Tower of St. Mary Magdalene, crowning the Vale of Taunton (the richest and most beautiful perhaps in Somersetshire) came to their relief, assuring them that their march was well-nigh accomplished. At this, three cheers suggested themselves; but as the Tourists were now in a refined neighbourhood, they thought it better to keep the '*noiseless* tenor of their way.' The

acclamation, therefore, was waived, and they proceeded to the Taunton Station, as much like Gentlemen as their faded garb and toil-marked gait permitted; and, after the usual bustle and trepidation lest they should be too late for the Train, arrived on the platform in due time, took their tickets, departed, and reached their respective homes in safety.

On concluding this Narrative, I cannot but express my consciousness of having done many of its subjects but very imperfect justice, as I intimated at the commencement. It must be obvious to anyone acquainted with the North of Devon, that there are many interesting places within that district which are not described or referred to in these pages. This is to be accounted for by their not lying within the limits of *The Tour*; and perhaps the short-coming may be a subject of congratulation to myself as well as to my Readers, as the less *they* have to peruse of my composition, the less *I* shall have to apologise for, and the less they will have to excuse.

The rambles of the four Friends, although not much favoured by the weather, afforded them much gratification. Indeed, it could not be otherwise, where all were disposed to please and be pleased; and I cannot help thinking that the

Excursion has been productive of something more than present enjoyment—strengthened frames, recollections of amusing incidents and conversations, memories of the most delightful scenery they ever beheld, and the cementing of mutual Friendships.

'Forsitan et olim hæc meminisse juvabit.'

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